

# PEACE

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## DRAMATIS PERSONAE<sup>1</sup>

TWO SERVANTS OF TRYGAEUS

TRYGAEUS<sup>2</sup>: upper classmen, farmer

DAUGHTER OF TRYGAEUS

HERMES

WAR

BATTLE-DIN

CHORUS OF FARMERS<sup>3</sup> [and its LEADER]

HIEROCLES [a seer and oracle-monger]

SICKLE-MAKER

ARMS-MERCHANT

[CREST-MAKER

BREASTPLATE-SELLER

TRUMPET-MAKER

HELMET-MAKER

SPEAR-MAKER]

SON OF LAMACHUS

SON OF CLEONYMUS

[Mute Characters:

PEACE

OPORA<sup>4</sup>

THEORIA<sup>5</sup>]

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1. Bracketed material lacks manuscript authority; it is intended only to facilitate a first reading of the play. Line numbers are borrowed from the Greek texts of the plays; they will not always be sequential in English.

2. Derived from the verb *trugaō*, which means “to harvest” or “bring in the vintage,” but it also reminds of *trugōidia*, a term Aristophanes uses to refer to comedy, as at *Acharnians* 499–500. Cf. *Clouds* 296.

3. The Aldine edition has “Chorus of Athmonian farmers,” thus limiting membership to men of Trygaeus’s deme or township in Athens. The actual composition of the chorus appears to change, as it seems to include Greeks of many cities and occupations during the excavation of Peace (459–507) but to be limited to Athenian or Athmonian farmers later.

4. *Opōra* designates autumn, the harvest, fruit, or, metaphorically, youthful ripeness.

5. *Theōria* has a wide range of meanings. In other contexts it can refer to an embassy, to being a spectator at games or the theater, to a sight or spectacle, or to theory or contemplation. Its main meaning here is “festival” or “festivity.”

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**SERVANT A:** Grab one! Grab me a cake for the dung beetle<sup>6</sup> as quick as you can!

**SERVANT B:** There! Give it to him! May he be doomed to perish in the worst way,

And may he never eat another cake more pleasant than this one!

**SERVANT A:** Give me another cake, one formed from donkey dung.

**SERVANT B:** Take another. But where is the one which you took for him just now?

He didn't eat it, did he?

**SERVANT A:** By Zeus, he seized it,  
Rolled it with his two feet, and scarfed it down whole.  
Now as quickly as you can, knead lots more—solid ones!

**SERVANT B** [to the Audience]: You dung collectors! Join in, by the gods,  
Unless you wish to watch me suffocate!

10

**SERVANT A:** Gimme another one! And another! One from a boy prostitute,  
For he says he desires one well compacted.

**SERVANT B:** Here!  
[To the audience] I think I'm in the clear, men, of at least one charge:  
No one would say that I eat any of what I knead!

**SERVANT A:** Yuck! Bring me yet another, and another;  
And keep kneading more.

**SERVANT B:** No, by Apollo, I won't;  
For I am no longer able to keep above the rising bilge waters.

**SERVANT A:** Then I'll pick it up, and carry in the entire tub of bilge.

**SERVANT B:** Carry it to the crows,<sup>7</sup> by Zeus, and yourself as well!

[To the audience] Now, if any of you knows where I might buy a nose without holes,

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6. *Kantharos*, "dung beetle," was also the name of a familiar comic poet, to whom the original audience would have seen a reference.

7. Since crows feed voraciously on carrion, going "to the crows" was a horrible fate. The general meaning here is "go to the dogs."

Tell me!  
 For there is no more wretched work  
 Than constantly kneading food for a dung beetle.  
 For whatever someone shits, a pig or a dog goes at it vigorously;  
 But this one bears himself haughtily with high thoughts and does not  
 deign to eat,  
 Unless I spend the whole day working to serve to him, as to a lady,  
 A cake rounded by kneading.  
 But I'll take a look—opening the door a little bit, so he doesn't see me—  
 30 to see whether he has quit his feeding.  
 [To the beetle] Go to it: don't ever cease from your eating  
Until, unaware, you blow yourself up.  
 How this accursed creature eats! Bending down like a wrestler,  
 Exposing its molars! And this while rotating its head  
 And its two hands, rather like this,  
 Just like those who plait the hawsers  
 For the heavy merchant ships!  
The beast is unclean, foul-smelling, and gluttonous.  
 From whichever of the divinities we owe this visitation, I do not know.  
 40 It sure does not seem to me to be from Aphrodite,  
 Nor again from the Graces!<sup>8</sup>

**SERVANT A:** Then from whom?

**SERVANT B:** There's no way that this wonder is not from Zeus the  
 Descender.<sup>9</sup>

**SERVANT A:** Then if one of the spectators—a young man  
 Who considers himself wise—would say, “What's going on?  
 What's the point of the dung beetle?” Then some Ionian man  
 Seated beside him would say,

8. The Graces were daughters of Zeus and attendants of Aphrodite. Hesiod, *Theogony* 907–11.

9. Rather than *kataibatou*, “descender with lightning bolts,” some MSS. read *skataibatou*, which would yield “dungwalker” or “dungmounter” and which would suggest homosexual relations. This would have been heard, even if it was not written.

"I think it's a riddle about Cleon,<sup>10</sup>

Since he shamelessly devours diarrhea."

I'm going to go in and give the beetle something to drink.<sup>11</sup>

**SERVANT B:** Then I will explain the argument to the boys,

To the half-men, to the men,

To the highest men, and

Especially to the men who think themselves beyond men:

My master is mad in a very new way,

Not the way you are, but in a very new and different way.

Throughout the day he looks toward heaven,

Gaping like this, and reviles Zeus, saying,

"O Zeus, whatever do you wish to do?

Put down your broom; do not sweep Greece clean!"

Shh! Shh!! Be silent!

I think I hear his voice.

*→ beyond ppl's control,  
won't listen so has  
to go to gods*

**TRYGAEUS:** O Zeus, whatever are you trying to do to our people?

You will gut our cities without realizing it.

**SERVANT B:** This is the very evil of which I was speaking;

For you are hearing the very pattern of his ravings.

Learn what he first said when his madness began.

For he said to himself right here:

"How could I ever go straight to Zeus?"

Then he made light little ladders

And on them he kept trying to scramble up to heaven,

Until he fell down and broke his head.

Then after this, yesterday, he vanished I know not where,

And brought back an enormous Aetna dung beetle,

And then he compelled me to groom it like a horse,

10. The most powerful leader in Athens after the death of Pericles. He favored vigorous prosecution of Athens' war with Sparta and was a favorite target for attack in the first five of Aristophanes' eleven surviving comedies. He died in the year preceding this play, which in Aristophanes' view helped make possible the peace achieved in this play. See 261-73 for Cleon as a pestle with which War would mash up the Greeks.

11. Presumably by urinating.

And he himself stroked it like a pony,  
 Saying, "My little Pegasus, my well-born winged one,  
 See to it that you take me up and fly straight to Zeus."<sup>12</sup>  
 But I will see what he is doing if I stoop and peep in. . . .  
 Oh! Woe of woes! Come here, neighbors, come here!

80 For in midair my master is rising  
 Up into the air on the dung beetle as if he were riding a horse!

**TRYGAEUS:** Calmly, calmly, easy does it, my pack-ass.  
 Do not take off too violently at the start,  
 Trusting in your strength;  
 Wait until you work up a sweat and loosen up  
 The tendons of your joints by the rush of your wings.  
 And do not breathe your bad breath on me, I beg you!  
 If you are going to do this, just stay here,  
 At our house.

90 **SERVANT B:** Master, lord, how demented you are!

**TRYGAEUS:** Quiet! Quiet!

**SERVANT B:** So why are you fruitlessly thrashing about in midair?

**TRYGAEUS:** I am flying for and over all the Greeks,  
 Having contrived a new and daring plan!

**SERVANT B:** Why are you flying? Why are you insane to no purpose?

**TRYGAEUS:** You must keep an auspicious silence,  
 Blabber no foolishness but raise a cheerful prayer.  
 Tell human beings to be silent,  
 And to wall off with new bricks  
 100 Their latrines and sewers,  
 And put their assholes under lock and key.

**SERVANT B:** There is no way I'll be silent, unless you tell me where you  
 intend to try to fly.

**TRYGAEUS:** Where else than to Zeus, to heaven!

↳ master trynna get to zeus

12. In Euripides' lost *Bellerophon*, the hero rides Pegasus up to the gods to complain of their mismanagement of the world.

**SERVANT B:** With what in mind?

**TRYGAEUS:** In order to ask him what he is planning to do  
Concerning the Greeks, all of them.

**SERVANT B:** And if he does not announce this to you?

**TRYGAEUS:** I will indict him for betraying Greece to the Medes.<sup>13</sup>

**SERVANT B:** No, by Dionysius, not while I am alive!

**TRYGAEUS:** There is no other way.

**SERVANT B:** Alas! Alas! Alas!  
Little children, your father is leaving you all alone  
And going off secretly to heaven!  
So plead with your father, you ill-starred little things.

**LITTLE CHILD**<sup>14</sup>: Father, father, then is the report which has reached  
Our domicile a true one,  
That you have abandoned me  
And will go windborne<sup>15</sup> to the crows, keeping company with birds?  
Is any of this true? Speak, father, if you love me at all.

**TRYGAEUS:** As it is possible to infer, girls, I am really grieved in your regard:  
whenever you ask  
Me for bread and call me "Papa,"  
There is not even a tiny bit of silver inside, none at all.  
But if I fare well and come back again, you will have  
At the proper time a great treat and some knuckle sauce to go with it.

**LITTLE CHILD:** In what way will you travel there?  
For no ship will conduct you on this voyage.<sup>16</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** A winged colt will convey me. I will not go by ship.

**LITTLE CHILD:** What are you thinking, that you  
Have bridled a beetle and intend to ride to the gods, daddy?

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13. By allowing war among the Greeks to continue, Zeus makes them vulnerable to the Medes (Persians).

14. For comic effect, Aristophanes mimics tragic diction as well as tragic scenes. According to the scholia, the mimicry here is based on Euripides' lost *Aeolus*.

15. This word also means, "in vain," "without effect."

16. The scholia note that these exchanges parody Euripides' *Bellerophon*.

→ dung beetle

**TRYGAEUS:** In the words of Aesop, this alone has been found  
 130 To reach the gods on wings.<sup>17</sup>

**LITTLE CHILD:** Father, father, you have spoken an unbelievable myth,  
 That a foul-smelling beast made it to the gods!

**TRYGAEUS:** Once upon a time long ago, one got there on account  
 Of his hatred for the eagle, and rolled down its eggs out of revenge.

**LITTLE CHILD:** Then shouldn't you have bridled up winged Pegasus  
 So your appearance to the gods would be more tragic?

**TRYGAEUS:** But then, my dear, I'd need twice the provisions;  
 Whereas this way whatever provisions I myself gobble down,  
With these I will furnish him fodder.

140 **LITTLE CHILD:** But what if he falls into the deep wet sea?  
 How will he be able to escape with his wings wet?

**TRYGAEUS:** I got an oar on purpose, which I will use,<sup>18</sup>  
 And my boat will be a Naxian-made beetle-boat.<sup>19</sup>

**LITTLE CHILD:** But what harbor will receive you as you are tossed  
 by storms?

**TRYGAEUS:** The Piraeus of course has its Beetle Harbor.

**LITTLE CHILD:** Be careful not to slip and fall off, and then—  
 As a cripple—offer up a story for Euripides  
 And become a tragedy.<sup>20</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** That's for me to worry about; so, farewell!  
 150 [To the audience] But you, on whose behalf I undertake these labors,  
 Do not fart or shit for three days.  
 For if he smells it once he is up in midair,  
 He will throw me head first and head for his pasture.

17. This seems to refer to Aesop's fable of the eagle and the snail, but see also *Wasps* 1448.

18. By "oar" Trygaeus means the comic phallus with which male characters were outfitted.

19. The Greek word for "dung beetle" also referred to a kind of light boat (as well as to a large drinking vessel). It was also the name for one of the three harbors in the Piraeus, as the next lines indicate.

20. For Aristophanes' spoofing slander that Euripides preferred crippled heroes, see also *Acharnians* 411, 455, 1214–15; *Women at the Thesmophoria* 22–24; *Frogs* 846.



But come, Pegasus, advance and take your leave,  
 Setting off with your bright ears  
 That rattling of the curb chains on your bridle.  
 What are you doing? What are you doing? Which way are you inclining  
 Your nostrils? Toward the sewers!  
 Throw yourself confidently away from earth,  
 And then extend your swift wings  
 And head straight for Zeus's halls,  
 Keeping your nose pointed away from poop  
 And from your routine foods.  
 You there, human being, what are you doing? You—the one shitting  
 In the Piraeus near the whores,  
 You will destroy me! You will destroy me! Will you not bury it,  
 And put a lot of earth over it,  
 And plant thyme on top  
 And pour on scented oil? Because if I fall from here  
 And get hurt, the city of the Chians  
 Will owe five talents for my death,  
 All on account of your asshole.  
 Oh! Oh! How afraid I am, and now I am no longer joking!  
 Crane operator,<sup>21</sup> keep your mind on me,  
 For a bit of gas is already churning near my navel,  
 And if you are not careful, I'll be furnishing fodder for the beetle.  
 But I think I'm near the gods,  
 And in fact I spy Zeus's house. *→ gets to ~~heaven~~?  
Zeus's house*  
 Who is it that waits upon Zeus's doors? Won't you open up?!

**HERMES:** Whence am I assaulted by a mortal's. . . . Lord Heracles!  
 What is this foul thing?

**TRYGAEUS:** A beetle-horse.

**HERMES:** You disgusting, audacious, shameless  
 Loser,—total loser, and biggest loser!

21. Greek drama employed a crane that could raise or lower actors, usually gods, to ten feet or so above the stage. In calling out to the crane operator to be careful, Trygaeus speaks as a fearful actor and breaks the dramatic illusion that he is riding a flying beetle.

How did you get up here, you biggest loser of all losers?  
What's your name? Won't you speak?

**TRYGAEUS:** Biggest loser.

**HERMES:** Where's your kin from? Tell me.

**TRYGAEUS:** Biggest loser.<sup>22</sup>

**HERMES:** Who's your father?

**TRYGAEUS:** Biggest loser.

**HERMES:** There is no way you will not die—by Earth!—  
If you do not tell me your name, whatever it is.

190 **TRYGAEUS:** Trygaeus, from Athmonon, a clever pruner of grape vines,  
No sycophant, and no lover of troubles.<sup>23</sup>

**HERMES:** What have you come for?

**TRYGAEUS:** To bring you this meat.

**HERMES:** How can you have gotten here, you poor little thing!

**TRYGAEUS:** You greedy little thing,  
Do you see that I no longer seem to you to be the biggest loser?  
Come, now, call Zeus for me.

**HERMES:** Ha, ha!

You're not even going to get near the gods,  
For they're gone: they moved out yesterday.

→ abandoned greeks  
for their bad behavior  
(warfare)

**TRYGAEUS:** Where on earth to?

**HERMES:** "Earth," you say?

**TRYGAEUS:** But where?

**HERMES:** Very far. Simply put, under the very dome of heaven.

22. Although it is even less likely that a place be called "biggest loser" than a person, the very inappropriateness of the response might add to the humor. Hermes' questions are the usual way for one Greek to identify another: name, paternity, and place of origin.

23. The Greek word *pragmata* suggests meddling, as by way of legal disputes, including those with which sycophants harassed others. It may here allude also to the troubles that come from the war, as it does at 293, 352, and 1297. Trygaeus is from the township in Athens called Athmonon.

**TRYGAEUS:** Then how is it that you have been left here alone? 200

**HERMES:** I am watching over the gods' utensils that were left behind,  
Little cups, bowls, and wine jars.

**TRYGAEUS:** Why did the gods move out?

→ why they moved out

**HERMES:** They became angry at the Greeks. Thus they settled  
War here, where they had been,  
Allowing him to do to you whatever he wishes.  
They themselves moved up higher, as high as possible,  
So they don't have to keep looking upon your fighting  
And won't hear your pleas.

**TRYGAEUS:** Why did they do this to us? Tell me. 210

**HERMES:** Because you many times chose to make war,<sup>24</sup> even though they  
were trying

To bring about a truce. And if the Spartans

Got the upper hand, they would speak as follows:

"By the two gods, now Attica will pay the price!"<sup>25</sup>

But if, on the other hand, you of Attica would succeed in something,

And the Spartans would come asking about peace,

You would directly say, "We are being tricked,

By Athena! By Zeus, we must not heed them!

They will come again, if we keep Pylos."<sup>26</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** The character of this remark, at least, sure sounds like us. 220

**HERMES:** I thus don't know if in the future you'll ever see Peace again.

**TRYGAEUS:** But where has she gone?

24. Compare Homer, *Odyssey* 1.32–43, where Zeus assigns directly to human beings the responsibility for their misery. Trygaeus's effort to place the blame on Zeus goes against at least part of the tradition.

25. The Spartans often swore to the twin hero gods Castor and Pollux, also called the Dioscuri. (See 285.)

26. The Athenians won the Battle of Pylos, kept possession of the area and its fort, and took as prisoners about 120 members of the Spartan ruling class. This huge victory strengthened Cleon's hand and inclined the Athenians to exploit their advantage rather than seek peace. (As Thucydides put it, the Athenians "kept grasping for more," 4.41.4.) On the Spartan prisoners, see 479–80.

→ peace in cave

**HERMES:** War threw her into a deep cave.

**TRYGAEUS:** Which one?

**HERMES:** The one down here. And then  
 You see how many stones he put on top,  
In order that you never get her.

**TRYGAEUS:** Tell me, what is he preparing to do to us?

**HERMES:** The only thing I know is that last evening  
 He brought in a mortar of preternatural size.

230 **TRYGAEUS:** What use will he make of this mortar?

**HERMES:** He wishes to grind up your cities in it.  
 But I'm leaving, for in my opinion he's about to come out;  
 At least he's making a racket inside. [Exit Hermes.]

**TRYGAEUS:** O, woe is me—frightened me! I'll run away from him: I think I  
 too heard  
 The sound of a mortar of war.

**WAR:** Alas for you, mortals, mortals, mortals with much to endure,  
 How severely your jaws will ache with pain any moment now!

**TRYGAEUS:** Lord Apollo, the breadth of that mortar!  
 How great an evil it is! And that look of War!  
 240 So is this the one we've been trying to escape,  
 The terrible one, the one who always has a shield, the one who [sends  
 shit] down our legs?

**WAR:** Alas, Prasiae, thrice wretched!<sup>27</sup> No, five times  
 And many tens wretched, how you will perish on this very day.

**TRYGAEUS:** This, men, is not yet a problem for us;  
 For this evil belongs to Sparta.

**WAR:** Megara, Megara: how you will be ground  
 Into a perfect paste, all of you.

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27. Located in the Peloponnese, Prasiae had already been sacked by Athens (Thucydides 2.56), but War will add new woes to those already suffered, plausibly if Sparta had occupied it (Thucydides 6.105). The comic reason for picking on Prasiae is that it makes a pun with "leeks," which War adds as he grinds up his tasty paste.

**TRYGAEUS:** My, my, what great and bitter tears  
He's tossed in for the Megarians!<sup>28</sup>

**WAR:** Alas, Sicily, how you too are being destroyed!

250

**TRYGAEUS:** What a city, now to be wretched, will be grated away!

**WAR:** Okay, let me now pour in also this honey, Attic honey.

**TRYGAEUS:** Hey, I advise you to use another honey;  
This one costs four obols. Spare the one from Attica.

**WAR:** Boy, Boy, Battle-din!

**BATTLE-DIN:** Why are you calling me?

**WAR:** You're  
Going to weep big time! Have you been standing around not working?  
Here's a knuckle for you! [Beats him.]

**BATTLE-DIN:** That was bitter! O, woe of woes, master.  
You didn't put any garlic on that knuckle, did you?

**WAR:** Run and fetch a pestle.

**BATTLE-DIN:** But, sir, we don't have one. We moved in just yesterday.

260

**WAR:** Won't you run fast and get one from the Athenians?

**BATTLE-DIN:** I will, by Zeus. (If I don't, it means tears.)

**TRYGAEUS** [to audience]: Now what shall we do, you poor little humans?  
You see how great our danger is,  
For if he comes back with the pestle,  
War will sit down and mash up our cities with it.  
But, Dionysius,<sup>29</sup> may he perish and not bring it back!

**WAR:** Hey!

**BATTLE-DIN:** What?

**WAR:** Didn't you bring it?

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28. The word for "tears" sounds loosely similar to "garlic," which could also in this paste-making context have been modified by "great and bitter."

29. The god of the theater, of whom there was a statue in the theater, which might be addressed here.

**BATTLE-DIN:** Well. . . . The Athenians' pestle is lost and gone,  
270 That leather-seller, who stirred up Greece.<sup>30</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Revered Lady, Mistress Athena, he did well in dying, at least,  
And precisely when the city needed it,  
Before he<sup>31</sup> poured the paste on us.

**WAR:** Then won't you go fetch another from Sparta, and fast?

**BATTLE-DIN:** I will, master.

**WAR:** Be back soon!

**TRYGAEUS:** Men, what will we suffer? Now our crisis is great indeed!  
But if one of you happens to have been initiated in Samothrace,<sup>32</sup>  
Now is a fine time to pray that the two feet  
Of the one who is running this errand be turned aside and twisted back.

280 **BATTLE-DIN:** Woe is me, and woe indeed, and then, especially: Woe!

**WAR:** What is it? You didn't fail to bring it, did you?

**BATTLE-DIN:** The Spartans'

Pestle is also lost and gone. → *no pestals*

**WAR:** What, you rascal?

**BATTLE-DIN:** They loaned it to others

In the lands up toward Thrace, and then they lost it.

**TRYGAEUS:** They did well, Dioscuri, well indeed.

Perhaps things just might go well: take heart, mortals!

**WAR:** Gather up and carry this gear back again.

I'm going inside to make a pestle.

290 **TRYGAEUS:** So here we now are: here's that song of Datis,<sup>33</sup>  
The one which he used to sing while jerking off around noon,

30. The Athenian pestle is Cleon; the Spartan pestle is Brasidas (lines 274–84). Both these generals died the year before this play in the battle of Amphipolis, thus improving radically the prospects for peace. See line 47 and Thucydides 5.10.

31. Presumably War but possibly Cleon.

32. Those initiated into the religious mystery cult in Samothrace were believed to be more likely to receive favorable responses to their prayers, though it is not known what gods were associated with the cult.

33. Datis was the name of a commander of the Persian army defeated by the Athenians at Marathon.

“How pleased am I, what joy I’m given, what delight I feel!”  
 Now’s a fine time for us, Greek men,  
 To free ourselves of woes and battles  
 And to drag out Peace, who’s dear to all,  
 Before some other pestle prevents it.  
 But, farmers, traders, carpenters,  
 Craftsmen, resident aliens, foreigners,  
 And islanders, come here, all peoples,  
 And as quickly as possible get shovels, levers, and ropes;  
 For now it’s possible for us to take hold of “the Good Divinity.”<sup>34</sup>

300

**CHORUS LEADER:** Come here, everyone, and come eagerly, straight for  
 salvation!

Let’s give aid, all of you Greeks, if ever we did,  
 And free ourselves from battle-ranks and cowardly crimson uniforms.<sup>35</sup>  
 For this day shines out as one hostile to Lamachus.<sup>36</sup>  
 Tell us, therefore, if something needs doing, and be our foreman.  
 For there is no way I intend to be tired today,  
 Until with levers and other tools I drag up into the light  
 The greatest of all goddesses and the one most friendly to grapevines.

**TRYGAEUS:** Won’t you be quiet, so that in being overly overjoyed at  
 this event

You don’t enflame War in there with your shouting!

310

**CHORUS LEADER:** But we’re joyful at having heard a proclamation like this,  
 Instead of “Come with rations for three days.”

**TRYGAEUS:** Watch out now for that Cerberus down below,<sup>37</sup>  
 Lest by his spluttering and shouting, as he used to do when he was up here,  
 He prevent us from dragging out the goddess.

34. The first libation after a banquet and to begin a drinking party would often be offered to “the Good Divinity.” It was offered with undiluted wine, and the divinity in question may have been Dionysius, the god of wine.

35. The word translated “cowardly” means more generally “bad” or “evil.” The leaders of the army, who wore these crimson uniforms, are charged with cowardice also at 1172–78.

36. An Athenian general and Aristophanes’ preferred example of one too fond of war. As the play concludes Trygaeus scolds a young boy who insists on singing about war and discovers that the child is the “son of Lamachus” (1289–92).

37. For Cleon as Cerberus, see also *Knights* 1017, 1030.

**CHORUS LEADER:** None of them will take her away now,  
If I get my hands on her just once. Hurrah! Hurrah!

**TRYGAEUS:** You will destroy me, men, if you don't stop shouting,  
For he will run out and throw all our efforts into confusion with his feet.<sup>38</sup>

320 **CHORUS LEADER:** So let him stir up and trample on everything, and throw  
it into confusion!

We would not cease rejoicing today.

**TRYGAEUS:** What is this evil? What's wrong with you, men? By the gods,  
Don't let your dancing destroy this most noble project!

**CHORUS LEADER:** But I don't wish to dance! Yet even though I'm not trying  
to move my legs,

They are dancing of their own accord from sheer pleasure.

**TRYGAEUS:** Not now! No longer! But stop, stop your dancing!

**CHORUS LEADER:** Okay. Look: I have stopped.

**TRYGAEUS:** So you say, but you have not yet stopped!

**CHORUS LEADER:** Let me do just this one step—then no more.

**TRYGAEUS:** Okay, just this one, but then you will dance no more—not at all!

330 **CHORUS LEADER:** We'll stop dancing, if it helps you at all.

**TRYGAEUS:** But look, you have not yet stopped!

**CHORUS LEADER:** After we kick out our right legs here, by Zeus, we  
will conclude.

**TRYGAEUS:** I'll grant you this, on the condition you'll cause me no  
more pain.

**CHORUS LEADER:** But it's necessary that I kick out my left leg too!  
For I'm filled with pleasure, I rejoice, I fart, and I laugh  
Even more from tossing my shield than if I'd given old age the slip.

**TRYGAEUS:** No you don't: don't rejoice now, at least; for you don't yet know  
for sure.

But when once we've gotten her, then rejoice  
And shout and laugh;

↓  
Peace

38. "He" might refer to War or perhaps to Cleon. Neither appears, though Hermes soon will.



Then you'll be able  
 To sail away, to stay at home, to screw, to sleep,  
 To go and see the great festivals,  
 To feast, to play drinking games,  
 To be sybaritic,  
 To shout "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

340

**CHORUS:** Oh, if it should be that I see this day!  
 For I've endured many woes and camp beds  
 Which Phormio provided.<sup>39</sup>

And you'd no longer find me a bitter or peevish juryman,  
 Nor, of course, harsh in my ways, as I was before,  
 But you'd see me gentle and much younger,  
 If I were free of these woes.

350

For long enough have we been ruined and worn down,  
 Wandering, with spear and shield  
 To and from the Lyceum.<sup>40</sup>

But, come tell us, by doing what in particular will we gratify you?  
 For a certain good fortune chose you as our leader.

360

**TRYGAEUS:** Come, let me see, where shall we carry off these stones to?  
 [Hermes enters.]

**HERMES:** Bold wretch! What do you think you're doing?

**TRYGAEUS:** Nothing wicked; just what Cillicon<sup>41</sup> did.

**HERMES:** You're done for, you wretched fool!

**TRYGAEUS:** Yes indeed, if that's my lot. For since you are Hermes,  
 I know you'll hold a *lot-tery*.<sup>42</sup>

**HERMES:** You're done for; you're really done for.

**TRYGAEUS:** Oh? On what day?

39. An Athenian general in the early years of the war with Sparta who was especially successful in naval campaigns.

40. A public exercise area where troops may also have mustered.

41. A notorious villain and perhaps also a traitor.

42. Hermes was thought to preside over lotteries. The scholia say that at Athens on any given day only a single person could be executed—chosen by lot if there were more than one condemned to death at that time.

→ pros of  
 peace

**HERMES:** Right now!

**TRYGAEUS:** But I haven't yet made the purchases, neither of grain nor of Dried cheese, of one who is about to perish.<sup>43</sup>

**HERMES:** Yet you will be rubbed out!<sup>44</sup>

370 **TRYGAEUS:** And why didn't I notice that I was getting so great a good?

**HERMES:** Don't you know that Zeus proclaimed death for anyone who should be caught trying to Dig her up?

**TRYGAEUS:** So, then, there is every necessity that I die now?

**HERMES:** Know it well!

**TRYGAEUS:** Loan me now three drachmas for a piglet;  
For I must be initiated before I die.<sup>45</sup>

**HERMES:** O Zeus, sender of the thunder and lightning bolt!

**TRYGAEUS:** By the gods, do not denounce us, I beg you, master.

**HERMES:** I couldn't stay silent!

**TRYGAEUS:** By the meats that I eagerly came to bring you, do!

380 **HERMES:** But, sir, I'll be pulverized by Zeus  
If I don't shriek this out and howl about it.

**TRYGAEUS:** Don't howl about it, I entreat you, dear little Hermes.<sup>46</sup>  
Tell me, what's up with you, men? You stand there dumbstruck.  
Rascals, don't remain silent! If you do, he'll howl.

**CHORUS:** Don't do it, master Hermes, don't don't don't.

If you are aware of having gobbled down a gratifying piglet from me,  
Do not believe it negligible as regards this present issue.

**TRYGAEUS:** Don't you hear how they fawn upon you, lord and master?

---

43. Since these were foods that soldiers took on campaigns, the joke is not about a traditional last meal but about the perils of military service.

44. The verb may also mean "fucked," in which case Trygaeus's response might not be ironic.

45. Piglets were sacrificed when initiates entered into the Eleusinian Mysteries, which promised a happy afterlife.

46. Trygaeus uses an endearing or coaxing diminutive of Hermes' name. At 416 he says "dear Hermes" literally.

**CHORUS:** Don't be hostile and thus keep us from getting her.

390

But be gracious to us,

You who among the divinities are

The most loving of human beings and the greatest giver of gifts,

If you are ever disgusted by the helmet crests and furrowed brows  
of Peisander.<sup>47</sup>

We will glorify you on every occasion, master,

And for all time, with holy rites of sacrifice

And great processions.

**TRYGAEUS:** Come, I entreat you, pity their call,

400

Since they are honoring you more than before.<sup>48</sup>

**HERMES:** Because they are now more thievish than ever before.<sup>49</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** And let me tell you a great and terrible matter,

Which is being plotted against all gods.

**HERMES:** Come, then, out with it; for perhaps you would persuade me.

**TRYGAEUS:** The Moon and the Sun (who stops at nothing)

Have been plotting against you for a long time already

And are betraying Greece to the barbarians.

**HERMES:** For what end do they do this?

**TRYGAEUS:** Because, by Zeus,

410

We sacrifice to you, while the barbarians sacrifice to them.

They therefore would of course wish us all to be destroyed,

So that they themselves might seize control of the rites of the gods.

**HERMES:** So this is why they've for a long time been filching days and

Nibbling their own circles by trickery.<sup>50</sup>

47. As emphasized here, Peisander was among those who urged support for the war. His democratic credentials also showed in his selection as a lead prosecutor of people accused of the mutilation of the Herms. Nevertheless, he later joined an oligarchic conspiracy in 412 B.C. He is referred to as cowardly at *Birds* 1557.

48. Hermes was the beneficiary of no major festivals or sacrificial rites at Athens.

49. Hermes was the patron deity of trickery and, hence, of thievery. See *Wealth* 1157–59, for example. Scholars hotly debate the authenticity of this line, and some attribute it to Trygaeus.

50. Or "cycles." Hermes seems to refer to difficulties in keeping the lunar calendar correct. Cf. *Clouds* 615–16.

**TRYGAEUS:** Yes, by Zeus! Therefore, dear Hermes,  
Help us with her eagerly and join in pulling her out, → *he will = new religion (like birds, replace gods)*  
And it will be to you that we celebrate the Great Panathenaic Festival  
And all the other rites of the gods:

420 **HERMES:** The Mysteries, the Dipolieia, the Adonia—all for Hermes.  
 And other cities, gaining rest from evils,  
 Will everywhere sacrifice to Hermes the Averter of Evils,  
 And you will obtain still other goods. As a first gift  
 I offer you this bowl for use in libations.

**HERMES:** Oh, my, how prone to pity I have always been for golden vessels.  
 It's your job from here on out, men. Go on in with your shovels,  
And drag those stones out as quickly as possible.

**CHORUS LEADER:** We'll do it. But you, wisest of the gods, since you have  
 taken charge,

Tell us as a craftsman would what we must do.

430 As for the rest, you'll find that we are not bad at working under direction.

**TRYGAEUS** [to Hermes]: Come, hold the bowl, and quickly,  
 So we can pray to the gods and get to work.

**HERMES:** Libation! Libation! Holy silence! Holy silence!  
 As we pour this libation let us pray that this day  
 Is the beginning of many good things for all the Greeks,  
 And that whatever man helps eagerly with the ropes  
 May never need take up a shield.

**TRYGAEUS:** No, by Zeus, but may he live his life in peace  
 440 Stoking the coals of a hot girlfriend.

**HERMES:** But whoever wishes that there be war instead, may he never, Lord  
 Dionysius, cease—

**TRYGAEUS:** —picking arrowheads out of his elbows!

**HERMES:** And if someone, out of the desire to be a leader of soldiers,  
 Resists your coming up into the light again, Revered Lady,<sup>51</sup> may he in  
 these battles—

51. Trygaeus refers to Peace, whereas he had before used this adjective, *potnia*, to refer to Athena (271).

**TRYGAEUS:** —suffer just what Cleonymus did!<sup>52</sup>

**HERMES:** And if any spear-maker or shield-huckster  
Desires battles so he can sell at a better price—

**TRYGAEUS:** —may he be captured by raiders and eat only barley-corns!

**HERMES:** And if someone does not join in helping  
Because he wishes to be a general or is a slave getting ready to  
run away<sup>53</sup>—

450

**TRYGAEUS:** —may he be drawn out on the torture wheel and whipped.

**HERMES:** And may good things come to us! Hurrah! Strike up the Paean!  
Hurrah!

**TRYGAEUS:** Take away the “strike”; just say “Hurrah!”

**HERMES:** Hurrah! Hurrah! I say only “Hurrah!”

**TRYGAEUS:** To Hermes, to the Graces, to the Seasons, to Aphrodite,  
to Yearning!<sup>54</sup>

**HERMES:** But not to Ares!

**TRYGAEUS:** No!

**HERMES:** Nor even to Enyalios?

**TRYGAEUS:** No!

**TRYGAEUS:** Then let everyone get to it and haul on the ropes.

**CHORUS:** Heave!

**HERMES:** Heave hard!

460

**CHORUS:** Heave!

**HERMES:** Heave really hard!

**CHORUS:** Heave! Heave!

52. Cleonymus is a frequent butt of jokes in Aristophanes for a variety of weaknesses but especially for cowardice. See also *Birds* 289–90.

53. The war made it easier for slaves to run away, especially since Athens' enemies offered refuge.

54. The Seasons (*Horai*) were daughters of Zeus and Themis. Yearning (*Pothos*) appears as a son of Aphrodite in one source, as a son of Eros in another. Enyalios (below) was either an epithet of Ares or a god of war distinct from Ares. On the Graces, see line 41 and note.

**TRYGAEUS:** But the men aren't pulling equally.

Won't you join in helping? What airs you put on!

You Boeotians will be sorry for this!<sup>55</sup>

**HERMES:** Now heave! *→ oppose peace (not helping)*

**TRYGAEUS:** Heave!

**CHORUS LEADER:** Come on, you two, join with us in the pulling!<sup>56</sup>

470 **TRYGAEUS:** Am I not pulling, putting my weight into it,  
And working in earnest?

**CHORUS LEADER:** Then why is the work not going forward?

**TRYGAEUS:** Lamachus, you're being unjust by sitting and blocking us.  
We have no need of your shield, mister.<sup>57</sup>

**HERMES:** Nor have these Argives been pulling, not for a long time!  
Instead they mock those who work and suffer, while  
Getting paid in fine barley from both sides.<sup>58</sup>

**HERMES:** But the Spartans, good fellow, are pulling in manly fashion.

**TRYGAEUS:** Don't you know that it's only the ones in the stocks who  
are eager,

480 And the bronze-smith is restraining them.<sup>59</sup>

**HERMES:** Nor are the Megarians accomplishing anything,<sup>60</sup>  
Although they are pulling relentlessly, like puppies—

**TRYGAEUS:** —yet they are all but destroyed by hunger, by Zeus.<sup>61</sup>

55. The Boeotians opposed the Peace of Nicias.

56. This accusation is presumably directed against Hermes and Trygaeus, the two supervisors.

57. "Mister" here translates *anthrōpos*, the Greek word for human being, which denies any special title or status to Lamachus; and "shield" is for "Mormo," a Gorgon-like monster featured on the emblem of Lamachus's shield. See *Acharnians* 572 ff.

58. Argos's opposition to the peace may also have stemmed from fear that shared rule between Athens and Sparta would have made it more difficult for cities like theirs to enjoy independence.

59. The Greek here is not clear but seems to say that only the Spartan prisoners from Pylos were eager for peace, while their guards keep them from having any effect.

60. The Megarians refused to sign the Peace of Nicias.

61. There are once again major disagreements over which characters speak which lines in this section.

**HERMES:** We're not accomplishing anything, men.

Let's all join in, once again in full accord.

**CHORUS:** Heave!

**HERMES:** Heave hard!

**CHORUS:** Heave!

**HERMES:** Heave, by Zeus!

**CHORUS LEADER:** We're moving it a little at least.

490

**TRYGAEUS:** This "little" is no surprise, since

Some are straining one way; others are pulling the opposite way.

You'll be beaten, you Argives! *↳ oppose peace*

**HERMES:** Now heave!

**TRYGAEUS:** Heave!

**CHORUS:** How malevolent some of us are!

**TRYGAEUS:** At least you who long for peace,

Pull in manly fashion!

**CHORUS:** But there are others who are preventing us!

**HERMES:** Men of Megara, won't you go to the crows?

500

For when she remembers you, the goddess hates you;

For you were the first—you anointed her with garlic!

To you Athenians I say stop pulling

With the grip you are using now,

For you are doing nothing but disputing like jurors.

If you desire to drag her out,

Withdraw a little more toward the sea.<sup>62</sup>

**CHORUS LEADER:** Come, men, let us farmers grab hold all by ourselves!

**HERMES:** This business is advancing much more with you, men.

**CHORUS LEADER:** He says the business is advancing. Let every man

510

be eager.

**TRYGAEUS:** The farmers alone are advancing the work, and no one else!

---

62. That is to say, Athens should be satisfied with its maritime empire and not seek land in addition.

**CHORUS:** Come on now, come on everyone!

**HERMES:** Look, now it's close by!

**CHORUS:** Let's not ease up now, but  
Let's exert ourselves more manfully.

**HERMES:** That's it!

**CHORUS:** Now heave; everyone heave!  
Heave, heave, heave, heave, heave, heave!  
Heave, heave, heave, heave, heave, everyone.

[Peace emerges, as do Opora and Theoria.]

→ missing necessities + pleasures  
that come w/ peace

520 **TRYGAEUS:** Revered Lady, Giver of Grapes, with what words may I  
address you?

Where could I find a 10,000 gallon phrase  
To address you with? I don't have one of my own.  
Welcome, Opora, and you too Theoria.  
O Theoria, what a face!  
How pleasant is your breath to my heart!  
It's the sweetest, like perfume and the cessation of hostilities.

**HERMES:** Not at all like the aroma of a soldier's pack, is it!

**TRYGAEUS:** "I spurn of a hateful mortal his most hateful knapsack."<sup>63</sup>

530 It reeks of acidic onion belches,  
While she smells of harvest, hospitality, festivals of Dionysius,  
Flutes, tragic actors, lyrics of Sophocles, thrushes to dine on,  
Scraps of verses of Euripides—

**HERMES:** You'll shed tears for having told that lie at her expense:  
For she takes no pleasure in a poet of contentious verses.

**TRYGAEUS:** —and of ivy, wine strainers, bleating sheep,  
The breasts of women running to the field,  
A drunken slave girl, an overturned pitcher,  
And many other good things.

63. The scholia indicate that this line is a parody of line 727 of Euripides' lost *Telephus*. Aristophanes substitutes "knapsack" for "child."



**HERMES:** Come now: look how the cities now reconciled  
Chatter with each other and laugh with gladness—

540

**TRYGAEUS:** —and yet they all have daemonically black eyes and  
Are using eye-cups.<sup>64</sup>

**HERMES:** —and take a look at the faces of  
These spectators here, so you can recognize their trades.

**TRYGAEUS:** Yuck!

**HERMES:** Don't you see that maker of helmet crests, tearing at his hair?

**TRYGAEUS:** Right, but the hoe-maker just farted at that sword-maker!

**HERMES:** And don't you see how pleased the scythe-maker is?

**TRYGAEUS:** And how he gave the spear-maker the finger?

**HERMES:** Come now, tell the farmers to depart.

550

**TRYGAEUS:** Hearken, people! Let the farmers take  
Their farming implements and go back to their fields as quickly  
as possible,  
Without spear, sword, and javelin,  
Since everything here is now full of ripe old peace.  
After singing the paeon, let everyone go to work in the fields.

**CHORUS LEADER:** O day yearned for by the just and farmers,  
I am glad to see you and wish to give a greeting to my vines;  
And as for the fig trees I planted when I was younger,  
It's our heart's desire to hug them fondly after so long a time.

**TRYGAEUS:** But now, men, let us first pray to the goddess,  
Who eliminated those helmet crests and Gorgon-studded shields;  
Then we'll hurry to our fields,  
After having bought some good salt-fish for the farm.

560

**HERMES:** Poseidon, how noble do their ranks appear,  
Close-packed and intimidating, like cakes and the scene at full-  
bore parties!

---

64. Some sort of heated cup was used in treating black eyes.

**TRYGAEUS:** Yes, by Zeus, for the clod-mallet gleams brightly, having been primed for battle,

And the pitchforks flash in the sun.

Nobly they will set free [from weeds] the soil between the plants.

So I too now desire to go into the fields

570 And again, after so long, start working my little plot of earth with my mattock.

But men, after recalling

The old way of life

Which she herself<sup>65</sup> once provided us—

Those cakes of fruit,

The figs and myrtle berries,

The sweet new wine,

The patches of violets beside the well,

And the olive trees,

For which we yearn—

580 In return for all these things,

Now address the goddess.

**CHORUS:** Welcome! Welcome! You have come to us who are so glad, dearest one.

I am overcome with yearning for you

And have a daemonic wish to go back to the fields.

For you—you whom we yearn for—were the greatest gain

For all of us who pounded out a life of farming,

590 Since you alone would benefit us.

Once before, in your time, we experienced many things

That were at once sweet, free of charge, and dear.

For us rustics in the fields,

You were our wheat and our salvation.

Thus the little grape vines, young fig saplings,

And whatever other plants there are

600 Will greet you gladly and with smiles of joy.

But when she was away from us this long time, wherever was she?

Teach us this, you most benevolent of the gods.

---

65. Here and through line 705, Peace is often addressed and referred to without being named.

**HERMES:** Wisest farmers, attend to my words,  
 If you wish to hear how she perished.  
 First of all, Phidias started the disaster when he got into trouble.<sup>66</sup>  
 Then Pericles became afraid that he might share in Phidias's misfortune.  
 Fearing your natures and your ferocious character,  
 Before he suffered anything terrible himself,  
 He enflamed the city by tossing in a small spark of a Megarian decree,<sup>67</sup>  
 And he fanned it into a war big enough that its smoke  
 Could make all Greeks cry, both those over there and the ones here.  
 Although unwilling in the  
 Beginning, a grape vine burned loudly,  
 And on being struck, a storage jar kicked back in anger at another  
 storage jar,  
 And since there was no longer anyone to stop it, she then vanished.

610

**TRYGAEUS:** By Apollo, I hadn't learned this from anyone,  
 Nor had I heard how Phidias was related to her.

**CHORUS LEADER:** Nor had I, until now. So this is why she's got such a  
 lovely face,  
 Since she is related to him. Many things escape our notice!

**HERMES:** And then, when the cities you ruled came to know that  
 You were angry with one another and were baring your fangs,  
 Out of fear for their tribute payments they contrived every measure they  
 could against you, and  
 They tried to win over the greatest of the Spartans with cold cash.<sup>68</sup>  
 And they, since they seek gain shamefully and are thoroughly dishonest  
 with foreigners,

620

66. Phidias, the great sculptor, was accused of embezzling gold when creating the monumental statue of Athena Parthenos on the Acropolis, but he fled before his trial. The beauty of his sculpture is again alluded to in comic fashion at line 618. For another Aristophanean account of the origins of the war, see *Acharnians* 509–56.

67. An Athenian act barring Megara from all Athenian-controlled ports and markets. Sparta objected, Pericles persuaded the Athenians to ignore the Spartan complaint, and the war began soon after (Thucydides 1.144–45).

68. Athens was the head of a large maritime empire, and required tribute from all subject states. A Spartan invasion of Athenian territory might make it easier for such subjects to revolt, but the war also tempted Athens to increase their tribute payments.

Shamefully tossed her out and snatched up War.  
 And their gains were evils for the farmers.  
 For the triremes sent forth from here would take revenge  
 And swallow down the figs of blameless men.

**TRYGÆUS:** Our response was just, since they cut down that black fig tree  
 of mine,  
 Which I planted and reared.<sup>69</sup>

630 **CHORUS LEADER:** Yes, by Zeus, it was just indeed, sir, since they  
 Hurlled a rock and destroyed my eight-bushel storage bin!

**HERMES:** And then, when the working people came in from the field,<sup>70</sup>  
 They did not realize they were being bought and sold in the  
 same manner,<sup>71</sup>  
 But since they were lacking in raisins and longing for dried figs,  
 They turned to the orators. But these,  
 Who knew quite well that the poor were growing weak and were  
 without barley,  
 Shoved this goddess away with their threatening cries—  
 Even though she often appeared because of her yearning for this land,  
 And they shook down the fat and wealthy ones among the allies,  
 640 Trotting out the charge that they were plotting with Brasidas.  
 And then like little dogs you would tear at the accused;  
 For the city then was pale and crouching in fear,  
 And she ate up with great pleasure whatever slanders anyone offered her.  
 When the allies saw the beatings they were taking,  
 They stuffed the mouths of those doing it with gold,  
 Which made them rich; but even if Greece were completely depopulated,  
 You would not have noticed. The one behind all this was a  
leather salesman.<sup>72</sup>

69. A parody, by the substitution of a fig tree for children, of Euripides' *Medea* 1349.

70. Hermes refers to 431 B.C., when the outlying population was forced by the Spartan invasion to come within the shelter of Athens' walls (Thucydides 2.14–17).

71. In the same manner as the farmers of Sparta (622–27).

72. That is, Cleon, who is now dead, as Trygaeus will indicate in his next speech. Another reference to Cleon and leather is just below, at 669.

**TRYGAEUS:** Stop! Stop, Master Hermes, do not speak,  
But let that man stay down below, right where he is.  
For the man no longer belongs to us, but to you.<sup>73</sup>  
 So whatever you might say about him—  
 Even if he was one who would stop at nothing when he was alive,  
 And a loudmouth and a sycophant,  
 And a tool for stirring things up and for throwing them into confusion—  
 You would now be bad-mouthing your own  
 To say any of these things at all.  
 But tell me, Revered Lady, why you are silent.

650

**HERMES:** She would not speak, at least to these spectators.

For she is still very angry with them for what she suffered. → peace = mad @ them

**TRYGAEUS:** Well, then, let her whisper to you alone.

660

**HERMES:** Tell me what you are thinking about them, dearest.

Come, you who among women most hates shields.

[Peace appears to whisper to Hermes, here and below.]

Yes. I am listening. These are your complaints? I understand.

Listen, all of you, to why she blames you.

She says that when she came here on her own initiative after the events  
 at Pylos

And brought a chest full of treaties for the city,

She was thrice voted down in the Assembly.<sup>74</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** In this we were wrong, but be forgiving.

For our mind was then in our leather.

**HERMES:** Come, now, and hear what she just asked me:

670

Who was especially malevolent to her here,

And who was her friend and was earnest that there be no battles?

**TRYGAEUS:** The most well disposed by far was Cleonymus.

73. Hermes bore some responsibility for the dead in part because of his role as conductor of souls to Hades.

74. The Athenians won a great victory at Pylos in the summer of 425, thus leading the Spartans to seek peace. See also Thucydides 4.41 and note 26 above.

**HERMES:** How did this Cleonymus seem to be  
As regards warfare?

**TRYGAEUS:** He was best in soul, except that  
He did not descend from the father he said he did.  
For if ever he went out as a soldier,  
The first thing he did was to discard his weapons.

**HERMES:** Hear now another thing she asked me just now:  
680 Who is now the master of the rock on the Pnyx?<sup>75</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Hyperbolos now holds this place.<sup>76</sup>  
[To Peace] But what are you doing? Why are you turning your head away?

**HERMES:** She is turning away from the people, outraged because  
They chose so wicked a leader.

**TRYGAEUS:** Yes, but we won't use him any more for anything.  
The people just now being at a loss for a guardian, and naked,  
Clad themselves with him just for the moment.

**HERMES:** She asks how this will be advantageous for the city.

**TRYGAEUS:** We will become better at deliberating.

**HERMES:** In what way?

690 **TRYGAEUS:** Because he happens to be a lamp-maker. Before this we  
Groped in the dark to solve our problems,  
But now we will deliberate about everything in lamplight.

**HERMES:** Oh, oh, she just bade me ask you about something else.

**TRYGAEUS:** About what?

**HERMES:** About many ancient matters which she left behind back then.  
First, she asked how Sophocles is doing.

**TRYGAEUS:** He's happy. But he's undergoing something wondrous.

**HERMES:** What?

**TRYGAEUS:** Having been Sophocles, he's now becoming Simonides!

75. The Pnyx was a rocky hill on which the Athenian Assembly met.

76. After the death of Cleon, Hyperbolos was for four years the leading demagogue. See 921 and 1319 below, as well as *Clouds* 561.

**HERMES:** Simonides? How so?

**TRYGAEUS:** Because although he is old and worn out,  
He'd go sailing on a wicker mat for the sake of gain.<sup>77</sup>

**HERMES:** What about the wise Cratinus, is he alive?<sup>78</sup>

700

**TRYGAEUS:** He died when the Spartans invaded.

**HERMES:** From what?

**TRYGAEUS:** From what? He just fainted away, for he couldn't stand seeing  
A full wine jar get broken. And can you think how many other things  
Have happened in the city!  
Thus, Mistress,<sup>79</sup> we will never let go of you again.

**HERMES:** Come, now, on these terms take Opora here  
To be your wife, and then dwelling together with her  
In the countryside, beget for yourself litters of grapes.

**TRYGAEUS:** Come here, dearest, and let me kiss you!  
Does it seem to you, Master Hermes, that it would  
Do me any harm after all this time to thrust into Opora?

710

**HERMES:** No, not if you then drank a little pennyroyal.<sup>80</sup>  
But take Theoria here and lead her as quickly as possible  
To the Council, to whom she once belonged.<sup>81</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Council, blessedly happy in your Theoria,  
How much broth you will gulp down in the next three days!  
And how much boiled sausage and meat you will devour!  
But, dear Hermes, hearty farewell.

---

77. Simonides was known for his old age and especially for his love of money. Sophocles was now about 75; what evidence there may have been for calling him greedy is unclear.

78. Cratinus was the great Athenian comic poet of the previous generation, the chief originator of the Old Comedy as we find it in Aristophanes. His last known play, *Wine Flask*, was produced in 423 B.C. Here and in *Acharnians* (848–53, 1173) and *Knights* (400, 526–36), Aristophanes mocks him for his love of drinking.

79. *Despoina* is the feminine form of the word for "master," *despotēs*, which Trygaeus uses of Hermes at 710 and elsewhere. It does not suggest any erotic relationship. It is used of Athena at 271 and twice again of Peace at 976.

80. Pennyroyal was a kind of mint drink. Pliny wrote that it was effective as a cure for nausea.

81. Before the war, the Council sent festivity delegations to Delphi and to Delos.

**HERMES:** And you, human being, farewell: go, and remember me!

720 **TRYGAEUS:** Let's fly home, Dung Beetle, home!

**HERMES:** He's not here, good fellow.

**TRYGAEUS:** Where has he gone?

**HERMES:** He has gone off harnessed to Zeus's chariot, and he bears his lightning.<sup>82</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** How then will the poor wretch get his food up here?

**HERMES:** He will dine on the "ambrosia" of Ganymede.<sup>83</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Then how will I descend?

**HERMES:** Take heart. You'll do it in fine fashion. Go this way, past the goddess herself.

**TRYGAEUS:** Come here, Maidens. Follow along with me quickly, because Many yearn for you greatly and are waiting fully erect.

[Exit all but the Chorus.] ↳ hit @ Gods?

**CHORUS LEADER:** Go, and farewell. Meanwhile, let's give our gear<sup>84</sup>

730 To our attendants to keep safe, for lots of thieves are especially  
Accustomed to lurk around this stage and do evil.  
So guard these things courageously; while as for us,  
Let's tell these spectators the path of our words and what's on our mind.  
The ushers ought to beat any comic poet who comes forward in  
the anapests  
Of the parabasis<sup>85</sup> and praises himself in the front of the theater.

82. This line is from Euripides' *Bellerophon* (fr. 312) describing how the winged horse who flew to heaven, Pegasus, remained in heaven and bore Zeus's lightning.

83. A beautiful young mortal carried off by Zeus to be his cup bearer and beloved.

84. The Chorus came on stage equipped with tools used in the excavation of the goddess, so it is probably these which they now ask attendants to guard courageously.

85. A feature of Old Comedy in which only the chorus would remain on stage. In most cases the chorus would give up its dramatic role in the play and speak directly to the audience about other matters, such as the insufficiently-recognized excellences of the author of the play. The parabasis was thus a sort of interlude. Since the heart of the parabasis was written in anapests, it could be referred to by this meter, as here and at *Birds* 684. *Peace* has a second parabasis at 1127-90. See note on 1127.



But if, Daughter of Zeus,<sup>86</sup> it is fitting to honor someone who among  
human beings is

The best comic producer and has become most famous,  
Our producer declares that he's the one who deserves great praise.<sup>87</sup>

For in the first place, he alone among human beings stopped his  
rivals from

Always cracking jokes about rags and from making war on lice; 740

And with regard to those stage Heracleses who knead bread and yet go  
hungry<sup>88</sup>—the ones who

Run away, attempt deception, and intentionally get themselves beaten—  
he was the first to strip

Away their civic honors and drive them into exile; and he dismissed those  
slaves whom others

Always bring onto the stage in tears, as well as those whom they bring  
on only

So a fellow slave can make jokes about being beaten and then ask,  
“Hey, unhappy one, what happened to your skin? Did the whip attack you  
with repeated blows to

Your sides, and did it ravage your back?”

By removing such evils, vulgarity, and low-class buffoonery,

He made our art great and built it high as a tower, fortifying it

With great verses, thoughts, and jokes far from commonplace. 750

Not mocking the lesser human beings of ordinary life, nor women,

But with the anger of Heracles he set upon the greatest,

Facing the terrible smells of curing leather<sup>89</sup> and muck-minded threats.

First of all, I did battle with the sharp-fanged one himself,<sup>90</sup>

---

86. The Muses were daughters of Zeus.

87. This comic producer was Aristophanes himself. In going on to claim that he avoided all commonplace jokes, he must have been joking.

88. Mocking a satyr drama of Euripides, *Syleus*.

89. Another reference to Cleon, who traded in leather. This passage is almost identical to *Wasps* 1029–37.

90. The image is of Cleon as Cerberus, the canine guard of Hades, whom Heracles had dragged to the surface. In the next line, the reference is to Cynna, an Athenian prostitute. Her name and the word for female dog are closely related; thus Aristophanes gets to call Cleon both the hell-hound Cerberus and the whore, Cynna.

From whose eyes Cynna's rays flashed most terribly,  
 And one hundred heads of cursed flatterers licked in a circle all around  
 his head,  
 And he had the voice of a mountain torrent in full surge, a deadly one,  
 And the smell of a seal, the unwashed balls of a Lamia,<sup>91</sup> and the asshole  
 of a camel.<sup>92</sup>

Yet on seeing such a monster, I did not become afraid, but I went to war  
 on your behalf,

760 And for the islands, and I always stood my ground.

It is now therefore fitting that you repay me with gratitude and remember  
 me. For previously,

When I fared as I had intended,<sup>93</sup> I did not go looking for boys at the  
 wrestling schools, I took

My gear and promptly went on my way, after having afforded little pain  
 and much pleasure,

Furnishing everything needful.

Thus both the men

And the boys ought to be on my side.

And we exhort all the baldies<sup>94</sup>

To join me in being zealous for my victory,

For if I am victorious, everyone will say

770 Both over dinner and over drinks,

"Bring goodies for baldy! Give goodies to baldy!

Don't stint with the man who has the high forehead,

The noblest<sup>95</sup> of our poets."

**CHORUS:** Muse, having rejected wars, dance with me, your friend,  
 Celebrating the wedding feasts of gods,  
 The banquets of men,

---

91. A monster of lewdness who ate men and children, Lamia had the breasts of a woman and the lower parts of a donkey.

92. Aristophanes often mocked passive homosexuals by commenting on the expansion of their anal openings.

93. Aristophanes won the prize for his *Acharnians* in 425 and for his *Knights* in 424 at the Lenaia festivals.

94. Aristophanes makes fun of his own baldness. See also *Knights* 550.

95. *Gennaios*, which may refer to one's family or lineage in particular.

And the festivals for the blest,  
 For these have been your concerns since the beginning. 780  
 But if Carcinus comes and  
 Entreats you to dance with his children,<sup>96</sup>  
 Do not heed him  
 Or become his assistant,  
 But believe them all  
 To be home-bred quails,  
 Scraggy-necked dancers,  
 Dwarfish in nature, scraps of goat-turd, 790  
 Famished for new stunts.  
 For their father claimed that,  
 Although beyond his every hope  
 He had a play,  
 A weasel did away with it last night.  
 The wise poet must sing  
 Such public songs  
 Of the Graces  
 With their beautiful hair,  
 When in spring the perching swallow sings, 800  
 And Morsimus<sup>97</sup> does not get a chorus—  
 Nor Melanthios<sup>98</sup> either,  
 Whom I  
 Heard singing out  
 In a most bitter voice  
 When he and his brother  
 Obtained a tragic chorus,  
 Both of them being  
 Dainty-devouring Gorgons, 810  
 Skate-craving Harpies,  
 Foul hag-lovers, fish-gulpers  
 With armpits rank as goats.

96. Carcinus was a tragic poet whose three sons were dancers. They are teased also in the conclusion of the *Wasps*, 1497–1537.

97. A tragic poet and great-nephew of Aeschylus.

98. A tragic poet and perhaps a tragic actor. See also 1009–15 and *Birds* 151.

Hock up and spit a fat luger on them, Muse Divine,  
And play with me at my festival.

[Now back on Earth, Trygaeus reenters the stage with Opora and Theoria.]

**TRYGAEUS:** How difficult it was to go straight to the gods!

820 I've completely worn out my two legs.

[Addressing the audience] You were tiny to behold from up there.

You appeared from heaven, at least to me,

To be of pretty bad character,

But from here you seem of much worse character by far!

**SERVANT:** Master, you have come!

**TRYGAEUS:** So I have heard from someone.

**SERVANT:** What happened to you?

**TRYGAEUS:** I got a sore pair of legs on the long road I've traveled.

**SERVANT:** Come now: tell me—

**TRYGAEUS:** What?

**SERVANT:** Did you see any other man wandering in the air besides yourself?

**TRYGAEUS:** No, unless one considers two or three souls of  
dithyrambic poets.

830 **SERVANT:** What were they doing?

**TRYGAEUS:** They were flying about, collecting some  
Musical preludes that were floating in the fair-weather airy breezes.

**SERVANT:** So what they say is not the case,  
That we become stars in the air, when one dies?

**TRYGAEUS:** But it is!

**SERVANT:** Who is a star there now?

**TRYGAEUS:** Ion, from Chios, who once long ago composed  
Here on earth "The Dawn Star."

And when he went up, they all called him the dawn star right away.

**SERVANT:** Who are the shooting stars,  
The ones that burn as they race along?

840 **TRYGAEUS:** These are some of the rich stars

Who are walking away after dinner with lanterns, with fire in  
the lanterns.

[Gesturing toward Opora] But take her in as quickly as possible,

Wash out the tub, heat water,

Strew the marriage bed for her and me.

When you have done all this, come back here again.

[Gesturing toward Theoria] Meanwhile, I will give this girl to the Council.

**SERVANT:** Where did you get them?

**TRYGAEUS:** Where? From heaven.

**SERVANT:** I would not give three obols for the gods

If they deal in whores just as we mortals do.

**TRYGAEUS:** No, they don't . . . but even there some do make a living off  
of them.

Come now, let's go.

**SERVANT:** Tell me, shall I give her something to eat?

**TRYGAEUS:** Not at all. For she won't be willing to eat

Either bread or cake, since she's always been accustomed

To lick ambrosia up there beside the gods.

**SERVANT:** Then we must get something ready for her to lick down here too!

**CHORUS:** The old man fares happily now,

At least as far as one can see.

**TRYGAEUS:** What then will you say when you see me

As a radiant bridegroom!

**CHORUS:** You will be envied, old man,

For being young again,

Anointed with scented oil.

**TRYGAEUS:** I think so! And what will you say when we're together, and I'm  
holding her tits!

**CHORUS:** You will seem even happier than the whirling tops of Carcinus.<sup>99</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** And not justly?

Did I not climb aboard a beetle for transport

And save the Greeks, so that they now can all fuck and sleep safely in

the country?

99. The chorus refers to the sons of Carcinus, who are dancers, as tops.

**SERVANT:** The girl has had her bath, and all's fine with her rear.  
 The cake has been baked, the sesame bars are being shaped,  
 870 And all the other things are ready. All that's needed is the prick.

**TRYGAEUS:** Come, then, let's make haste  
 And give Theoria here to the Council.

**SERVANT:** But who is she?

**TRYGAEUS:** Why do you ask? This is Theoria.

**SERVANT:** The one we used to bang on the way to Brauron, when we were a  
 little tipsy?<sup>100</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** You know it! And she was taken with some difficulty.

**SERVANT:** Master, what a large every-four-years-festival asshole she has!

**TRYGAEUS** [to the audience]: Well, then, who among you is just? Who in  
 the world!

Who will take her and keep her safe for the Council?

You there, why are you tracing her perimeter?

**SERVANT:** Me? Well, it's for the Isthmian<sup>101</sup>

880 Games: I'm taking hold of a spot for my prick to camp in.

**TRYGAEUS** [to the audience]: You are still not saying who will be the one to  
 guard her! [To Theoria] You, come here.

I'll take you myself and deposit you right in the middle of them.

**SERVANT:** That guy is nodding assent.

**TRYGAEUS:** Who?

**SERVANT:** Who? It's Aripgrades<sup>102</sup>

Who is imploring you to lead her to him.

**TRYGAEUS:** But, good fellow,

He will fall upon her, down low, and lap up her soup.

[To Theoria] Come, now, put your gear<sup>103</sup> down on the ground.

100. Every four years there was a great festive procession, from Athens east to Brauron, to the shrine of the goddess Artemis, where maidens ran races and were initiated in a cult.

101. A sexual *double entendre*, as the Greek for "isthmus" can refer to a narrow passage or place of joining, as of two legs.

102. Apparently renowned for debauchery: *Knights* 1281 ff., *Wasps* 1280–83.

103. It appears the "gear" she puts down is her clothes.

Council! Prytanes!<sup>104</sup> Take a look at Opora!  
 Consider how many good things I've brought to give you!  
 You can right away lift her legs up in midair and enjoy a feast.  
 And this, you see, is her cooker.

890

**SERVANT:** How beautiful!

And it's her cooking that has blackened the area, then.  
 For before the war she was once the Council's pot-holder.<sup>105</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Now, then, with her in your possession it will be possible

For you to hold a very noble contest tomorrow:  
 Wrestle with her on the ground,  
 Stand her on her hands and knees,  
 Oil up for the pankration<sup>106</sup> and bang and burrow with youthful vigor  
 With both fist and prick.

On the day after tomorrow, after these events, you will hold horse races,  
 Where one racehorse will ride beside the other,  
 With chariots turned over on top of each other,  
 Panting and breathing hard, they will move against each other;  
 And other chariot drivers will lie with foreskins drawn back,  
 Having fallen at the turning-twisting points.<sup>107</sup>

900

But, Prytanes, receive Theoria!

See how eagerly this Prytane took her over!

But you would not have been so eager, if this had been business you had  
 to undertake without a

Bribe; in that case, I would have found you holding out your hand.<sup>108</sup>

**CHORUS:** Good for everyone

As man and citizen

Is such a one as he!

910

104. The Prytanes presided over the Council.

105. These had legs and were dark at the top, where the legs met, from smoke.

106. The pankration was an all-out fighting event that combined wrestling and boxing; only biting and eye-gouging were forbidden.

107. It appears that horses, riders, and the chariots themselves are all having sex; "racehorse" is also a sexual position. The word for a turning post in a chariot race can also refer to the vigorous twisting together of an active couple.

108. In order to make a proposal to the Council, one had to go through the Prytanes, whom Aristophanes is accusing of expecting a payoff.

**TRYGAEUS:** When you gather in your vintage,<sup>109</sup> you'll know even better what sort I am.

**CHORUS:** Even now it's clear, *→ Trygaeus*  
 For you've become a savior for all human beings.

**TRYGAEUS:** You'll say this when you drink a cup of new wine!

**CHORUS:** Except for the gods, we'll always hold that you are first.

**TRYGAEUS:** I, Trygaeus of Athmonon,  
 Am indeed deserving of many things from you,  
 920 Since I have set free the common throng of the people from  
terrible hardships  
 And the country folk from terrible labors, and put a stop to Hyperbolos.

**SERVANT:** Come then, what must we do next?

**TRYGAEUS:** What else than to install her with dedicatory pots?<sup>110</sup>

**CHORUS:** With pots? As if she were a contemptible little Herm?<sup>111</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Well what do you think? Do you wish to use a fatted ox?

**SERVANT:** An ox? Never, lest it then be necessary to give aid in war.<sup>112</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Then a big fat pig?

**SERVANT:** No! No!

**TRYGAEUS:** Why not?

**SERVANT:** So we don't suffer the piggishness of Theogenes.<sup>113</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Well, which of the remaining choices do you favor?

**SERVANT:** An "alas-sheep."

**TRYGAEUS:** An "alas-sheep"?!<sup>114</sup>

**SERVANT:** Yes, by Zeus!

109. The verb is from *trugaō*, so the speaker puns on his own name.

110. Pots contained bloodless offerings, beans or porridge, which Trygaeus proposes as appropriate for Peace, but which are less impressive than the great and bloody sacrifices of animals.

111. Herms were phallic statues of Hermes and were common throughout Athens. The word translated as "contemptible" might be more literally rendered as "blaming" or "grumbling."

112. There is a pun here on the words for "ox" and "to give aid in war."

113. A common name, so it is not known with precision who this particular Theogenes was. See also *Birds* 822 and *Wasps* 1183–84.

114. In the dative case, the word for sheep is *oi*, which also means "alas." The translation, "an alas-sheep" is an attempt to convey the pun that Aristophanes' audience would have heard.



**TRYGAEUS:** But this is an Ionian pronunciation.

930

**SERVANT:** As intended, since when someone  
Says in the Assembly that we need to go to war, those seated there may  
say in fear, in the Ionian  
Fashion, "Alas!"—

**TRYGAEUS:** Well said!

**SERVANT:** —and may be mild also in other respects as well.  
Thus, in our manners, we will be lambs to  
Each other and much more gentle toward our allies.

**TRYGAEUS:** Come now, get the sheep as quickly as possible.  
I'll provide the altar on which we will perform the sacrifice.

**CHORUS:** How all things—all those that god wills and fortune sets aright—  
Go as intended, and one thing follows another,  
At just the right moment!

940

**TRYGAEUS:** How clear this is! For look, the altar is right here at the door!

**CHORUS:** Hurry now, while a lusty breeze prevails,  
Divinely sent and shifting away from war.  
For now a divinity manifestly shifts its direction toward good things.

**TRYGAEUS:** Here's the ritual basket with barley corns, a garland, and a  
butcher knife,  
And here's the fire,  
So nothing is holding you back but the sheep.

**CHORUS:** Won't you two race against each other?  
For if Chaeris<sup>115</sup> sees you,  
He'll come even uninvited to play his flute,  
And then—I know this well—  
You will of course give him something  
For all his hard blowing.

950

**TRYGAEUS:** Come, you, take the ritual basket and the lustral water  
And quickly circle the altar, moving toward the right.

**SERVANT:** Done. What else? I've gone around it.

115. See *Birds* 857 and note, and compare such other freeloading characters as Hierocles at 1052–1126 and the unnamed poet in the *Birds* (904–55).

**TRYGAEUS:** Come, take this torch and dunk it in the water.<sup>116</sup>

960 [To the lamb] Now shake, you, and be quick about it. [To the Servant]  
 And you,  
 Hand over some of the barley, and wash your hands and hand me the  
 bowl of lustral water,  
 And throw some of the barley nuts to the spectators.

**SERVANT:** Done.

**TRYGAEUS:** You've thrown them already?

**SERVANT:** Yes, by Hermes:

Of all these who are here watching,  
 There is no one who does not have nuts.<sup>117</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** The women did not get any.

**SERVANT:** But tonight the men will give it to them.

**TRYGAEUS:** But let us pray. Who is here?<sup>118</sup> Wherever are "the many  
 and good"?

**SERVANT:** Come, let me give some to these,<sup>119</sup> for they are many and good.

970 **TRYGAEUS:** You believe them to be good?

**SERVANT:** Yes, aren't they, those who have come  
 And are standing their ground in this very same place,  
 Even though we are pouring all this water on them?

**TRYGAEUS:** But let us pray as quickly as possible.

**SERVANT:** Yes, let us pray.

**TRYGAEUS:** Most august and queenly goddess,  
 Revered lady Peace, mistress of choruses, mistress of marriages,  
 Accept our sacrifice.

---

116. The ritual apparently required the celebrant to use a doused firebrand to shake holy water onto the victim. The consequent shaking of the victim would signal assent to its impending sacrifice.

117. The Greek word for "barley corns" is also slang for penis.

118. Religious ritual included this question, the response being, "Many and good [people]." Trygaeus thus calls the merits of the audience into question. The text then plays, at line 972, on a secondary meaning of good as "courageous."

119. He probably sprinkles the chorus and not the audience in general; the chorus has taken risks to recover Peace.

**SERVANT:** Do accept it, most honored one, by Zeus,  
 And don't do what  
 Adulterous women do.  
 For in fact they open the door a bit  
 And stoop to peep out,  
 And if anyone pays them any mind,  
 They retreat,  
 And then if he goes away, they stoop and peep again.  
 Don't do any of this to us anymore!

980

**TRYGAEUS:** No, by Zeus, but freely reveal all of yourself  
 To us your lovers,  
 Who have been pining with desire for you  
 For thirteen years now,<sup>120</sup>  
 And wash away battles and tumults  
 In order that we might call you Lysimache.<sup>121</sup>  
 Bring an end  
 To our all-too-clever suspicions  
 Which we babble against each other,  
 And mix us Greeks together again, making a new beginning,  
 With the juicy extract of friendship;  
 And blend our mind with a gentler sympathy.  
 Grant that our marketplace be filled up with good things,  
 With large cloves of garlic from Megara, young cucumbers,  
 Apples, pomegranates,  
 Little woolen garments for our slaves;  
 And grant that we see people coming from Boeotia bearing  
 Geese, ducks, pigeons, wrens,  
 And that baskets of eels arrive from Lake Copais,  
 And that we all in a throng join a jostling mob  
 Over these dainties, buying them up

990

1000

120. The war began ten years before the performance of the *Peace*. Perhaps Trygaeus mentions thirteen years either because the number is an estimate that also suggests a bad omen or because he wishes to call attention to important events that preceded the war (such as the conflict between Corinth and Corcyra and Athens' treaty with the latter).

121. Lysimache was a priestess of Athena. Her name means "releaser from battle" and is related to the name of the title character of the *Lysistrata* ("releaser from armies").

1010 Along with Morychus, Teleas, Glaucetes, and many other gluttons.  
 And grant further that Melanthius come to the market too late,  
 After the eels have been sold, leaving him to a tragic lament,  
 And then to sing a song from his *Medea*,  
 “Woe, woe, I’ve lost her; I’ve been widowed of her  
 While she was lying among the beets.”<sup>122</sup>  
 And grant that human beings rejoice at this.  
 Grant these things, most honored one, to us who pray.  
 [To the Servant] Take the knife. See to it that you slaughter the sheep  
 Like a top chef.

**SERVANT:** But it is not permitted.

**TRYGAEUS:** Why not?

1020 **SERVANT:** Peace certainly does not take pleasure in slaughters,  
Nor in an altar stained with blood.

**TRYGAEUS:** Okay, take it inside and sacrifice it,  
 Then after you have removed the thigh bones, bring them back out  
 And thus the sheep will be kept safe for the choregos.<sup>123</sup>

[Exit Servant.]

**CHORUS:** Then you must stay outside  
 And quickly put the split wood here  
 And everything else required for all of this.

**TRYGAEUS:** Don’t you think I’m arranging the firewood as a first-rate  
 seer would?

1030 **CHORUS:** How not? For as regards everything pertaining to a wise man,  
 What has escaped you?  
 Don’t you think everything that must be thought of by one who’s  
 Esteemed as having a wise mind and resourceful daring?

122. This lament is probably drawn in part from a lost *Medea*. Melanthius was either the author or played the role of Jason.

123. The *chorēgos* was the wealthy citizen assigned to pay the considerable costs associated with the performance of this play; Trygaeus is comically assuring him that he will receive the best meat.

**TRYGAEUS:** In any event, the wood has been lit, and it's afflicting Stilbides.<sup>124</sup>

I'll bring the table, so a boy servant will not be needed.

[Exit Trygaeus.]

**CHORUS:** Who would not praise such a man,  
Who saved our sacred city by risking everything?<sup>125</sup>

[Trygaeus returns with the table, the Servant with the thighs.]

Thus you will never cease being envied by all!

**SERVANT:** That's done. Take the thigh bones and put them on [the altar fire].

I'll go for the innards and sacrificial cakes. [He exits.]

1040

**TRYGAEUS:** I'll take care of this. [Calling to the Servant] You should have been back already!

[The Servant returns with innards and sacrificial cakes.]

**SERVANT:** Look: I'm here. Do I seem to be holding back?

**TRYGAEUS:** Roast them in fine fashion now, because someone is coming with a laurel crown.<sup>126</sup>

**SERVANT:** Whoever is he?

**TRYGAEUS:** He looks like a boaster.

**SERVANT:** Is he a seer?

**TRYGAEUS:** No, by Zeus, but it's apparently Hierocles,<sup>127</sup>  
The oracle-collector from Oreus.

**SERVANT:** What will he have to say?

**TRYGAEUS:** It's clear he'll somehow oppose the treaty.

**SERVANT:** No, he's come because of the savory smoke.

1050

124. Stilbides was a seer who later went to Sicily with Nicias. Trygaeus implies that his own broad competence enables him to dispense with help from a seer (as Peisetairos eventually rid himself of the priest in the *Birds*).

125. Strauss detects here a reference to Odysseus, though he destroyed a holy city whereas Trygaeus saved one (*Socrates and Aristophanes* 155).

126. The crown or garland suggests he is a professional priest and may expect deference.

127. Hierocles was a prominent Athenian interpreter of oracles.

**TRYGAEUS:** Let's seem not to see him.

**SERVANT:** Well said.

**HIEROCLES:** Whatever is this sacrifice, and to which of the gods?

**TRYGAEUS** [to the Servant]: Roast in silence, and keep away from the rump.

**HIEROCLES:** Will you not say to whom you are sacrificing?

**TRYGAEUS** [to the Servant]: The tail is doing fine.

**SERVANT:** Fine indeed. Dear Revered Lady Peace.

**HIEROCLES:** Come now, offer the first fruits, and then hand over the dedicated innards.

**TRYGAEUS:** It's better to roast them first.

**HIEROCLES:** But these here are already roasted!

**TRYGAEUS:** You are meddling, whoever you are! [To the Servant] Cut up the meat.

**HIEROCLES**<sup>128</sup>: Where's the table?

**TRYGAEUS** [to the Servant]: Bring the libation.

1060 **HIEROCLES:** The tongue is to be cut out and kept separate.

**TRYGAEUS:** We remember.  
But do you know what you need to do?

**HIEROCLES:** I will if you tell me.

**TRYGAEUS:** Don't converse with us at all; for we are making holy sacrifice to Peace.

**HIEROCLES:** "O mortals pointless and childish,—"<sup>129</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Look who's talking!

**HIEROCLES:** "—you men who in your folly do not comprehend the mind of the gods, you have  
Made compacts with glaring-eyed monkeys—"

**TRYGAEUS:** Oh, my, my!

128. Some assign these lines to the servant, others to Trygaeus. There is considerable disagreement over who says what in this section of the play.

129. The grandiose style of Hierocles' speeches here are standard for oracles delivered in verse.

**HIEROCLES:** Why are you laughing?

**TRYGAEUS:** I'm pleasantly amused by  
"Glaring-eyed monkeys."

**HIEROCLES:** "—and trembling gulls put  
Their trust in fox cubs, whose souls are deceitful, and deceitful as well are  
their wits."

**TRYGAEUS:** Would that you, boaster, had lungs as hot as these I'm cooking!

**HIEROCLES:** "For if the goddess nymphs did not deceive Bacis,<sup>130</sup> 1070  
Nor Bacis the mortals, nor the nymphs Bacis himself,—"

**TRYGAEUS:** May you perish, utterly destroyed, if you do not stop Bacizing.

**HIEROCLES:** "—it was not yet ordained divinely to loosen the fetters of  
Peace, but first—"

**TRYGAEUS:** —we must sprinkle on some salt.

**HIEROCLES:** "For this is not yet dear to the blessed gods, to cease from the  
din of battle,  
Until a wolf weds a sheep."

**TRYGAEUS:** And how, cursed one, could a wolf ever wed a sheep?

**HIEROCLES:** "So long as the Beetle lays most evil farts while fleeing, and in  
her eagerness for the pangs of birth Akalanthis  
Brings forth blind ones, so long must peace not be concluded."

**TRYGAEUS:** But what ought we to have done? Never stop making war? 1080  
Or cast lots to determine which side would cry louder,  
Even when it is possible to make a treaty and rule together over Greece?

**HIEROCLES:** "You will never make the crab walk upright."

**TRYGAEUS:** You will never in the future have another dinner in  
the Prytaneum,<sup>131</sup>  
Nor will you compose oracles afterwards about something that's already  
been done.

130. A famous Boeotian prophet. See also *Birds* 962 (and note); *Knights* 123–24, 1003–04.

131. The Athenians offered meals at public expense in the Prytaneum for officials, dignitaries, and others deemed worthy of honor.

**HIEROCLES:** “Nor would you ever make smooth the hedgehog’s rough spines.”

**TRYGAEUS:** Will you, then, ever stop your hoodwinking of the Athenians?

**HIEROCLES:** In keeping with what oracle was it that you burned thighs for the gods?

**TRYGAEUS:** The most noble one Homer composed, of course:<sup>132</sup>

1090

“Thus thrusting back the hateful cloud of war,  
They chose Peace and established her with a sacrificial victim.  
But when the thighs were burned and they partook of the innards,  
They poured a libation with their cups, and I was leading the way . . .”  
But no one gave a gleaming cup to the oracle-collector!

**HIEROCLES:** This has nothing to do with me: Sybil did not say it.

**TRYGAEUS:** But the wise Homer, by Zeus, did make this clever statement:

“Clanless, lawless, and hearthless is he  
Who loves horrid war among his people.”<sup>133</sup>

**HIEROCLES:** “Beware lest a kite somehow seize your wits,

1100

Using some bait to deceive you . . .”

**TRYGAEUS** [to the Servant]: Yes, do guard against this,

For this oracle is threatening to seize the innards.

Pour the libation, and bring here some of the innards.

**HIEROCLES:** But if this has been settled, I’ll be my own bath attendant.<sup>134</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Libation! libation!

**HIEROCLES:** Pour some for me too, and hand me a share of the innards.

**TRYGAEUS:** But this is not yet dear to the blessed gods.

The following must first occur: we pour libations, you go away.

Revered lady Peace, stay beside us throughout our lives.

**HIEROCLES:** Serve me the tongue.

**TRYGAEUS:** Get yours out of here. Libation!

132. Trygaeus is faking; his lines may echo Homer, but there is no exact reference.

133. These two lines replicate *Iliad* 9.63–64. Nestor here seeks to persuade Achilles to cease quarreling with Agamemnon so he can rejoin the fighting against the Trojans.

134. That is, I’ll help myself to the innards.



**SERVANT:** And take these with the libation, quickly.

**HIEROCLES:** Will no one give me some of the innards?

**TRYGAEUS:** No, for it is impossible for us to give you any until a wolf weds a sheep.

**HIEROCLES:** Please! I'm at your knees.

**TRYGAEUS:** Your supplication is in vain, fellow.  
For you will not make smooth the hedgehog's rough spines.  
Come here, spectators, and share in the innards with us.

**HIEROCLES:** And as for me?

**TRYGAEUS:** Feed on your Sybil.

**HIEROCLES:** No, by Earth, don't you two alone eat this!  
I'll take them from you; they're up for grabs.

**TRYGAEUS:** Beat this Bacis, beat him!

**HIEROCLES:** I call for witnesses!

**TRYGAEUS:** And I do too, because you're a glutton and a boaster of a man!  
Keep striking him with that stick, the boaster!

**SERVANT:** You do it. I'll peel those sheepskins off him,  
Which he acquires by fraud.  
Won't you throw off those sheepskins, Mr. Sacrificer?

**TRYGAEUS:** Did you hear? [Hierocles runs away.] What a crow<sup>135</sup> is he who  
came from  
Oreus. Won't he fly off that much more quickly to Elumnios!<sup>136</sup>

**CHORUS**<sup>137</sup>: I'm pleased. I'm pleased,  
Having been set free from my helmet,  
Cheese, and onions.  
For I'm not fond of battles,  
But of drinking by the fire  
With men who are companions and friends—

135. Crows were wont to steal food from altars.

136. A place near Oreus, whence Hierocles had come. There was also a sanctuary there, making it an appropriate spot for an oracle-collector.

137. The second parabasis begins here and ends at 1190.

Kindling the sticks that were cut  
 And dried during the summer,  
 And roasting some of my chickpeas,  
 And grilling some acorns,  
 And at the same time, kissing the Thracian [servant] girl  
 While my wife is bathing.

1140 **CHORUS LEADER:** Nothing is more pleasant than having the fields sown,  
 With the god sprinkling rain on them, and some neighbor who says,  
 “Tell me, what shall we do to pass the time, Comarchides?”<sup>138</sup>  
 “Drinking our fill would be pleasing to me, at least, since the god is  
 acting in fine fashion.  
 So toast three quarts of beans, wife,  
 And mix in some wheat with them, and take out some figs,  
 And have Syra call Manes in from the fields.<sup>139</sup>  
 For it’s not at all possible to prune the vines or work the soil today,  
 Since the ground is sopping wet.  
 And let someone bring from my house a thrush and the pair of finches.  
 1150 There is also some cream there and four hares,  
 Unless a weasel took one of them off during the night.  
 (There was one inside making I know not what sort of racket and  
 battle-din!)  
 Bring three of the hares to us, boy, and give one to my father.  
 Ask for myrtle branches<sup>140</sup> with berries at Aeschinades’ house.  
 And while on the course of this errand, let someone shout for Carinades,  
 So he might drink his fill with us  
 Since the god is doing good  
 And benefiting our ploughlands.”

**CHORUS:** And when the cicada  
 1160 Sings his sweet melody,  
 I take pleasure

138. This name could mean either “leader of the village” or “leader of the revels” or both. In the lines that follow (1142–58), the Chorus fantasizes an answer to the imaginary question (1141) of “some neighbor.”

139. Syra and Manes were common names for slaves.

140. These were woven into wreaths that were worn or held up at banquets during drinking songs.

In examining my Lemnian vines,  
 To see if they have already ripened their fruit,  
 (For this plant is early by nature),  
 And the wild fig, which I see swelling.  
 And when it is ripe,  
 I eat, and I keep at it,  
 And at the same time I say, "Dear Seasons!"  
 And I crush and mix thyme to drink,  
 And then I become fat  
 At that time of the summer—

1170

**CHORUS LEADER:** —more than I do looking at a commander, hateful to  
 the gods,

With his triple crests and bright crimson uniform,  
 Which he says is dyed work from Sardis.<sup>141</sup>  
 But if ever he must do battle in that crimson uniform,  
 He then dyes it all by himself with a brown dye.<sup>142</sup>  
 Then he is the first to run away, shaking his crests, like a quick-darting  
 cock-horse,<sup>143</sup>  
 While I stand my ground and guard the nets.<sup>144</sup>  
 And when they are at home, what they do is unbearable.  
 For they enroll<sup>145</sup> some of us two or three times,  
 And strike others out, all haphazardly. The expedition is tomorrow,  
 But someone has purchased no provisions, for he did not know he  
 was going;  
 Then standing by the statue of Pandion,<sup>146</sup> he sees himself; and at a loss  
 because of this nasty  
 Surprise, he runs off with a sour look on his face.

1180

141. Once the capital of Lydia and known for its wealth and luxury.

142. Literally, "a dye from Cyzicus," a city whose well-known coins were brown.

143. Such a mythical creature appeared in Aeschylus. See also *Birds* 800.

144. A comparison to those hunters who stay by the nets toward which wild game is driven.

145. Commanders levied soldiers for particular expeditions by posting their names, but it appears some served more frequently than others. See also *Knights* 1369–71.

146. Citizens of Athens were divided into ten tribes, each named for an ancestral hero. Aristophanes was himself of the tribe of Pandion. On the base of the statue of each eponymous hero were placed notices of draftees from that tribe.

This is what they do to us rustics, but less so to those from the city—  
 These who throw their shields away before both gods and men.<sup>147</sup>  
 For all of this these commanders will yet make a public reckoning to me,  
 if god is willing.

For they've been unjust to me in many things,  
 Being lions at home  
 But foxes in battle!<sup>148</sup>

1190

**TRYGAEUS:** Wow! Wow!

What a great throng has come to dinner for the wedding feast!  
 Here, clean off the tables with this,<sup>149</sup>  
 Because there's no further need for it at all.  
 Then heap up the cakes and thrushes,  
 And a good deal of the hare, and the wheat rolls.

[Enter Sickle-Maker and Potter with sickles and crocks.]

**SICKLE-MAKER:** Where, where is Trygaeus?

**TRYGAEUS:** I'm stewing thrushes.

**SICKLE-MAKER:** Dearest Trygaeus:

1200

How many good things you've done for us by making peace!  
 For before, no one would ever buy a sickle, not even at the price of  
 a penny,  
 But now I'm selling them for fifty drachmas;  
 And this potter here is selling his rustic crocks for three drachmas.  
 So, Trygaeus, take for free any of these sickles and crocks  
 You want. Accept these things as well.  
 For from what we have sold and the profits we've gained,  
 We bring you these gifts for your wedding.

**TRYGAEUS:** Come now, put them down beside me  
 And come in to dinner as quickly as possible,  
 For here's an arms-merchant approaching in anger.

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147. To throw one's shield away was to abandon the fight and run away.

148. Foxes hide in holes.

149. It is not clear what Trygaeus hands over to be used in the cleaning of the tables, although the next line suggests it is some decoration or garment associated with the military life which he now rejects and mocks.

[Enter an Arms-Merchant accompanied by makers of helmet-crests, breastplates, trumpets, helmets, and spears, each carrying his wares.]

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Oh, Trygaeus! How you've destroyed me, root and branch!

1210

**TRYGAEUS:** What is it, wretch? Are you sick with crestiness?

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** You have destroyed my art and livelihood—  
And his, and that spear-maker's too!

**TRYGAEUS:** In that case, what might I pay you for this pair of crests?

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** What would you pay?

**TRYGAEUS:** What would I pay? I'm ashamed.  
Nevertheless, a lot of work went into the attachment of the hairs,  
So I'd pay three quarts of dried figs for the pair of crests,  
So I could clean up the table with this one.<sup>150</sup>

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Go in and get the dried figs, then. [Trygaeus leaves to get the figs.]

[To the maker of crests] It's better to get something than nothing,  
good fellow.

1220

[Trygaeus returns.]

**TRYGAEUS:** Take them away! Take them away! To the crows with them!  
Away from the house!

They're shedding their hairs! This pair is worthless!  
I wouldn't pay even one fig for them!

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** For what, then, will I—wretched I—use  
This breastplate, most beautifully fitted and worth ten minas?<sup>151</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Let this not prove a loss to you!

Take this, of equal value, from me.

For what you have is quite suitable for crapping into—

150. Beginning here, and continuing for approximately forty-five lines, Trygaeus' jokes involve the comic transformation of heroic implements of war to mundane and even scatological peacetime purposes.

151. The arms-merchant underscores his woe by using tragic vocabulary: more literally, "this hollow of a breastplate." Ten minas, or 1000 drachmas, was a huge, perhaps an unbelievable sum, for a breastplate.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Stop insulting my wares!

1230 **TRYGAEUS:** —if one steadies it with three stones.<sup>152</sup> Clever, no?

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** No, for how will you ever wipe yourself, ignoramus?

**TRYGAEUS:** Like this, slipping my hand through the oar-port, and thus too with my other one.<sup>153</sup>

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** So you'd use both ports?

**TRYGAEUS:** I would, by Zeus, so I wouldn't get caught stealing an oar-port from the ship.<sup>154</sup>

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** So you're going to sit and shit on a ten-mina corselet?

**TRYGAEUS:** I will, by Zeus, you accursed rogue:

Do you think that I would sell my asshole for a thousand drachmas?<sup>155</sup>

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Come, then. Get the money.

**TRYGAEUS:** But, good fellow, it's too tight around my bottom. Take it away; I won't buy it.

1240 **ARMS-MERCHANT:** And for what will I use this trumpet,  
Which I once bought for sixty drachmas?

**TRYGAEUS:** Pour lead into its bell, and then  
On the topside insert a longish rod,  
And you will have a target for the game of flinging wine dregs.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Alas, you're mocking me.

**TRYGAEUS:** Then I'll recommend something else.

Pour in lead, just as I said.

Then attach the pan of a balance, hanging it by little cords,  
And even this will make it possible for you to weigh figs in the field for  
your servants.

152. Or "puts three stones next to it [to use for wiping]." Cf. *Wealth* 817.

153. He likens the arm holes of the breastplate to the oar-ports of a ship.

154. Athenians who outfitted warships sometimes drew wages for rowers they never hired, thus leaving some oar-ports unused and stealing the wages of the absent rowers.

155. A thousand drachmas was the equivalent of ten mina. Trygaeus wishes to indicate that his posterior is worth a vast amount. See note 151.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** You divinity so hard to propitiate!<sup>156</sup> How you have  
destroyed me, 1250

Since I once paid a mina also for these.<sup>157</sup>

And now what will I do? For who will buy them?

**TRYGAEUS:** Go and sell them to the Egyptians,  
For they're suitable for measuring laxatives.<sup>158</sup>

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Alas, helmet-maker, how wretchedly we have fared.

**TRYGAEUS:** He has not fared badly at all.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** But what will anyone still use these helmets for?

**TRYGAEUS:** If he learns how to make handles like these,<sup>159</sup>  
He'll sell them at a much better price than now.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Let's go, spear-maker. 1260

**TRYGAEUS:** No way, don't leave, since I'll buy these spears of his.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** Sure; but at what price?

**TRYGAEUS:** If they were sawn in two, I'd take them for vine stakes at one  
hundred per drachma.

**ARMS-MERCHANT:** We're being insulted! Let's get out of here, good fellow!

**TRYGAEUS:** Yes, by Zeus, because the children of the invited guests are  
already coming out

Here to piss, so—as it seems to me—

They can rehearse what they will sing later.

Whatever you have in mind to sing, boy,

Stand here beside me and rehearse it first.

**BOY A:** "Now let us begin with those more able to bear arms . . ." <sup>160</sup> 1270

156. For calling a human being a harsh or difficult divinity, see also *Clouds* 1264.

157. It is not clear what the Arms-Merchant now shows to Trygaeus.

158. At least as reported by Herodotus (2.77), the Egyptians used laxatives on a routine basis.

159. Trygaeus presumably gestures to the handles on large jars, which suggests a peacetime use for helmets as wine vessels.

160. The children begin to sing portions of war epics; at line 1280 Trygaeus imitates the meter of their songs but radically changes the content.

**TRYGAEUS:** Stop singing about bearing arms! Especially since Peace is present,

You with the triply-sick spirit;  
You are ignorant and accursed!

**BOY A:** “And when in their advance they were at close quarters, They thrust their bucklers and shields, fortified at the center, against each other.”

**TRYGAEUS:** Shields! Won’t you stop reminding us of shields?

**BOY A:** “Then at the same time were there groans and shouts of triumph from the men.”

**TRYGAEUS:** Groans of men? You’ll shed tears for it, by Dionysius, If you sing of groans, and of ones fortified at the center at that!

**BOY A:** But of what then shall I sing? Tell me what things you delight in.

1280 **TRYGAEUS:** “Thus did they feast on the meat of cattle,” and things like this: “They arranged their breakfast and whatever was most pleasant to eat.”

**BOY A:** “Thus did they feast on the meat of cattle, and they set free from Their harnesses the sweating necks of their horses, when they were sated with war.”

**TRYGAEUS:** Okay. They were sated with war, and then they started to eat. Sing this, how after they were sated they kept on eating.

**BOY A:** “Then when they stopped, they armed themselves—”

**TRYGAEUS:** —with gladness, I think.

**BOY A:** “—and went forth from their fortifications, and an unquenchable shout arose.”

**TRYGAEUS:** May you perish in the worst way, boy, you and your battles! For you sing of nothing but wars. Whose son are you, anyway?

**BOY A:** Me?

**TRYGAEUS:** Yes, you, by Zeus.

1290 **BOY A:** I am the son of Lamachus.<sup>161</sup>

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161. For Lamachus, whom Aristophanes treats as a war-mongering general, see line 304 and note.



**TRYGAEUS:** Yuck! I was wondering, as I listened, if you weren't the son of  
some man who

Wished for battle and then later cried over battle.

Get out of here and go sing to the spear-carriers.

Where is Cleonymus's<sup>162</sup> boy?

[Another youth comes forward.] Sing something before you go in,

For I know well that you will not sing of troubles.

For you are the boy of a moderate father.

**BOY B:** "Some Saeon exults over my shield, a faultless weapon,  
Which I unwillingly left behind beside a bush,—"<sup>163</sup>

**TRYGAEUS:** Tell me, you little pecker, are you singing about your  
own father? 1300

**BOY B:** "—but I saved my life!"

**TRYGAEUS:** But shamed your parents!

But let's go in. I know very well that there's no way you will ever forget

What you were just now singing about the shield,

Since you are born of that father.

The work that remains for all of you who remain out here is now

To crush and chew all this food, and not to work your jaws in vain.<sup>164</sup>

But go at it bravely

And grind with both jaws.

For your white teeth do no work, rascals,

If they are not chewing. 1310

**CHORUS LEADER:** We'll attend to this, at least; but you for your part do well  
to tell us to do so.

You who used to be hungry, tuck into the hares!

---

162. For Cleonymus, who was famous for dropping his shield on the battlefield and running away, see line 446 and note. The very mention of his name prepares the audience for a shield-dropping joke, which comes a few lines later at line 1300. First, though, Aristophanes presents the boy as reciting the famous shield epigram of the poet Archilochus, thus lending authority to the anti-heroic point of view.

163. These two lines begin Archilochus' anti-heroic epigram, which concludes, "But at least I saved my life. What's that shield to me? / Let it go. Some other time I'll get another not any worse," a sentiment that Trygaeus might applaud (but does not). A "Saeon" is a Thracian.

164. More literally, not to pull useless oars.

For it is not every day that it is possible  
 To chance upon cakes wandering about all unprotected.  
 So go ahead and start shoveling it in, or I say you'll regret it soon.

**TRYGAEUS:** Keep an auspicious silence, and let someone bring the bride  
 out here,

And bring the torches, and let all the people rejoice and cheer us on.

And now take the implements back again to the fields, while  
 Dancing, pouring libations, and driving Hyperbolus away,

1320 And praying to the gods

That they give wealth to the Greeks,

And that we produce lots of barley

And similarly much wine

And figs to nibble;

And that our wives bear for us,

And that we gather together again all good things,

As many as we lost, in a new beginning,

And put a stop to gleaming iron.

Come here, wife, to the field,

1330 And, my beauty, lie down with me, beautifully.

Hymen, Hymeneus O!<sup>165</sup>

**CHORUS LEADER:** Thrice-blessed,

How justly you now have good things!

**CHORUS:** Hymen, Hymeneus O!

Hymen, Hymeneus O!

**HALF-CHORUS A:** What shall we do with her?

**HALF-CHORUS B:** What shall we do with her?

**HALF-CHORUS A:** We'll gather her fruit!<sup>166</sup>

**HALF-CHORUS B:** We'll gather her fruit!

**HALF-CHORUS A:** But let those of us up front

1340 Raise up the groom, men,

And carry him.

165. Two names of the god of marriage.

166. The verb is a pun on the hero's name—"We will Trygaeus her." See also 913.

**CHORUS:** Hymen, Hymeneus O!  
Hymen, Hymeneus O!

**TRYGAEUS:** You will live beautifully,  
And have no problems,  
Gathering your figs.<sup>167</sup>

**CHORUS:** Hymen, Hymeneus O!  
Hymen, Hymeneus O!

**HALF-CHORUS A:** His fig is big and thick;

**HALF-CHORUS B:** Hers is sweet!

1350

**TRYGAEUS:** You will say so, at least, when you are eating,  
And drinking much wine.

**CHORUS:** Hymen, Hymeneus O!  
Hymen, Hymeneus O!

**TRYGAEUS:** Farewell, farewell, men!  
And if you follow me,  
You will eat cake!

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167. The word for fig is a double-entendre for the female and the male genitals.